

March 7, 2001

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FDA Commissioner

Dockets Management Branch (HFA 305)

Food and Drug Administration

5630 Fisher's Lane, Rm. 1061

Rockville, MD 20852

RE: Docket No. 00D-1598

The draft guidance on genetically modified food labeling is unacceptable. The FDA's continued insistence to deny mandatory labeling of genetically modified foods is contrary to what the Agency has consistently heard from the majority of consumers.

This draft legislation flies in the face of the current public opinion. I would point to public hearings on genetic engineering in 1999 and the FDA's *own* consumer focus groups in May 2000 as evidence. Also, the recently released final report of the joint EU-U.S. Biotechnology Consultative Forum emphasized the importance of mandatory labeling of genetically modified food products as an important tool in providing consumers with relevant information.

It is the sole charge of the FDA to inform and protect the citizens — not the corporations — of this country. The only "people" that stand to benefit from the proposed guidelines are the giant agribusinesses who are already under-regulated in this country. The FDA is the citizenry's main line of defense in the effort to keep the food supply as unpolluted as possible. If this Agency is unwilling to fulfill their mandate to protect individuals, what is the point of your funding? We could be equally well protected by no agency at all — for free. Capitulating to corporate interests seems to be the order of the day, but I would ask you to remember the fact that *your* children will be subject equally to the unforeseeable and, very likely, irreparable harm as mine.

I expect the FDA to listen to the will of the people — mandatory labeling of foods containing genetically modified ingredients. Citizens have the right of informed choice regarding the foods that they and their families consume. They have enjoined the FDA to facilitate that stream of information.

00D-1598

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Sincerely,

  
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